

World class recreation, bold science

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All work and no play makes J. Robert Oppenheimer a dull boy

Perhaps the importance of a good quality of life is why Oppie insisted that the future home of Los Alamos National Laboratory be located on the picturesque Pajarito Plateau in sunny Northern New Mexico.

Located at 7,000 feet above sea level, among cool ponderosa pine forests situated on a mesmerizing maze of mesa tops, Los Alamos features world-class recreation activities to complement the cutting-edge research conducted here. Los Alamos residents and laboratory employees enjoy access to a network of 100+ miles of high-quality trails, much of it within walking distance from key Laboratory facilities or from residents' front doors.

Los Alamos's urban trail network is unlike any in the Southwest

Hikers, mountain bikers, joggers, and dog walkers can wind through thick forest, cross deep canyons, or meander along picturesque mesas within city limits. The excellent trail system also provides a perfect gateway for people to escape the pressures of the day and kick back and immerse themselves in all that nature has to offer, whether that means enjoying an impromptu concert of bird calls, a colorful gallery of wildflowers, or simply sitting back to let the warmth of the sun lull them into a state of unparalleled contentment.

For the competitive set, an annual suite of races allows Laboratory employees to see how they measure up against coworkers, neighbors, and even some of the finest athletes from across the nation. The Atomic Man Duathlon takes place each April. This run-bike-run race tests a competitor's speed along a flat 10-kilometer course, followed by a hilly 40K road bike ride, and a flat, fast 5K run to the finish line. Ultrarunners and marathoners can enjoy the annual Jemez Mountain Trail Runs each May or the Run the Caldera Marathon through the stunningly beautiful Valles Caldera National Preserve in June. These races offer chances to explore the limits of endurance and the expanses of the local trail systems with 50-mile runs, 26-mile dirt marathons, or 50K and 10K distances.

Oppie's home of the Manhattan Project is also birthplace to the oldest continuously running triathlon in the nation. This nearly 40-year-old tradition attracts hundreds of participants each year to pedal the exquisitely challenging 20K bike course, swim 400 meters in the country's highest altitude public 50-meter pool, and finish up with a run on a grueling 5K course. Elsewhere on the annual activity calendar, the annual Pajarito Punishment mountain bike race, the Los Alamos Dog Jog, the Firecracker 5K Fourth of July Run, and myriad other events help ensure an active lifestyle through all of Los Alamos's beautiful four seasons.

With so much to do, it's no surprise that Los Alamos National Laboratory has remained a strong presence on the Pajarito Plateau for nearly 70 years.

Los Alamos National Laboratory

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